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STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON MIDDLE EAST

Summary

-- Lead story in all papers today, June 20, reports on the suicide operations in Jerusalem, the second in 48 hours, killing seven and injuring about 40 people. Other stories highlight the White House's decision to postpone President Bush's address to present his ideas on the Middle East that was scheduled for yesterday. Another major story focuses on King Abdullah's talks with the Egyptian President in Amman yesterday.

Editorial Commentary

-- "The dividing wall presents some positive points"

Columnist Ali Safadi writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (06/20): "Despite the many negative points about Israel's dividing wall . there are a number of positive points that we have to take into consideration. For one thing, the wall means the failure of Israel's military option and also means that Israel is building because of pressure from the Palestinian resistance. A second positive point is the fact that, with the building of this wall, Israel's ideology of a Greater Israel has become obsolete. Another point is the fact that this is the first time that Israel establishes borders between itself and areas it used to occupy, political borders that will be hard to change in the future. A fourth and final point is the destruction of the very foundations of the settlement movement in the West Bank."

GNEHM